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This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action. See MCI v. FCC, 515 F.2d 385 (D.C. Cir. 1974).

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FCC INITIATIVES PROCEEDING TO PROMOTE COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF SPECTRUM IN THE 71-76 GHZ, 81-86 GHZ AND 92-95 GHZ BANDS

Washington, D.C. – The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has initiated a proceeding to examine methods to promote the commercial development and growth of spectrum in the 71-76 GHz, 81-86 GHz and 92-95 GHz bands. These bands have never before been occupied by non-government users. Specifically, the FCC seeks comment on its proposed rules to allow use of these spectrum bands for a broad range of new fixed wireless services. Potential uses of this spectrum include high-speed wireless local area networks, broadband access systems for the Internet, point-to-point communications, and point-to-multipoint communications. These special uses are possible because of the shorter wavelengths, which are about three to five millimeters, and because of other technical characteristics that differentiate the 71-76 GHz, 81-86 GHz and 92-95 GHz bands from other bands.

Currently, this region of the spectrum is essentially undeveloped and available for new uses. Accordingly, the FCC seeks to develop a flexible and streamlined regulatory framework that will encourage innovative uses of the spectrum; accommodate future developments in technology and equipment; promote competition in the communications services, equipment and related markets; and advance the potential sharing between non-Federal Government and Federal Government systems. Additionally, the FCC anticipates that its proposals will encourage the use of technologies developed in military and scientific applications in a broad range of new products and services, such as high-speed wireless local area networks and broadband access systems for the Internet.

Background:

In July 2000, the Commission held a public forum on possible new uses of the 92-95 GHz band. Several speakers at the forum indicated that due to recent technological developments, new uses of this band are approaching practicality. In addition, in July 2001, Loea Communications Corporation experimented with technology it developed for use of the 71-76 GHz and 81-86 GHz bands. As a result, Loea filed a petition requesting the establishment of service rules for the licensed use of the 71-76 GHz and 81-86 GHz bands on September 10, 2001.

Specifics of the adopted Notice:

The Commission seeks comment on the following issues regarding use of the 71-76 GHz, 81-86 GHz and 92-95 GHz bands:

- Updating allocations in the 71-76 GHz, 81-86 GHz and 92-95 GHz bands to reflect changes in the international allocations made at the 1987 and 2000 World Radio Conferences;
- Developing an appropriate band plan for the 71-76 GHz, 81-86 GHz and 92-95 GHz bands;
- Providing for unlicensed use in some or all of these bands;

- Authorizing the new licensed services under Part 101 of its Rules and the new unlicensed devices under Part 15 of its Rules;
- Licensing the spectrum administered under Part 101 by geographic service areas, site-based areas, or some other scheme.

Action by the Commission on June 13, 2002 by Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (FCC 02-180). Chairman Powell, Commissioners Abernathy, Copps and Martin with Commissioners Abernathy, Copps and Martin issuing separate statements.

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